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ABSTRACT

Sound philosophical principles of coaching can enhance forensic programs as a whole while providing fulfilling student experiences. A forensic education philosophy involves recognizing the place and function of such values as freedom of expression, honesty, and creativity. Promotion of surface skills alone is an inadequate rationale for establishing and administering forensic programs; the focus must be on student development. Team members' views of listeners reflect their forensic program's philosophy. Participants should view audiences as an essential part of forensics. Coaches should encourage debaters to channel forensic participation beyond tournament settings to develop flexible, comprehensive skills. Program dimensions must also pay attention to language sensitivity and utilization, rejecting practices that use language as a means to deceive or mislead listeners and that use specialized language for a narrow audience. In addition, forensic coaching must integrate research, laboratory skills, and competencies. Students should be encouraged to take part in diverse kinds of forensic competitions. Comprehensive programs promote student growth, an achievement that is impossible with more limited participation. Coaching should encourage ethical values and discussion of social issues. Practice can improve student development, and rewards can motivate continued improvement. The forensic coach should serve as a role model of the ethical person. (Seventeen references are listed.) (SG)

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TOWARD A PHILOSOPHY OF COACHING FORENSICS

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Toward a Philosophy of Coaching Forensics

As forensic educators we often direct our students to question the underlying premises of arguments as they scrutinize research or prepare for cross-examination. In planning individual events, we insist that public speakers establish clear positions and that interpretative readers develop essential literary qualities to build strong performances. Alert forensic directors, in short, urge participants to construct their speeches, cases, and presentations upon sound principles in order to be thoroughly prepared and to communicate events effectively.

Analogously, we can compare the necessity of observing principles of speech preparation to the need for designing and applying sound philosophical premises in rewarding forensic programs. Such premises can be discerned in the organization, administration, and activities of directors and participants within specific programs. As this paper will maintain, sound philosophical principles of coaching can enhance the strength of forensic programs as a whole while providing challenging and fulfilling experiences for students. The absence of clear philosophical foundations can mean confusion for students and an unclear sense of direction in coaching. In their discussion of the essential place of philosophy in teaching, Kevin Ryan and James M. Cooper explain that professionals can prepare for professions without a command of the basic "meaning"

underlying the activities within their charge. Teaching professionals without a clear philosophy, they contend, are "like wind-up toys, moving along blindly without a plan or intellectual compass" (70). They conclude that "such thoughtlessness and robot-like behavior can cause problems in any occupation or profession, but particularly in teaching" (70).

Essential dictionary definitions remind us that philosophy indicates not only an appreciation of knowledge or wisdom, but the term also denotes attention to the investigation of principles underlying knowledge. It spans the study of logic, ethics, and even aesthetics. Educationally, philosophy is the underlying continuity or focus giving direction to activities in which we engage. As forensic educators, philosophy influences our choices and how we design and apply options in establishing competitive speech programs. More specifically, philosophy influences the educational goals we set for individual students and how entire forensic teams are organized; it affects how students and coaches visualize competition, and it determines the way programs see the communities in which they function.

A philosophy of forensic education involves recognizing the place and function of significant values. By utilizing educationally sound values and ethical standards, forensic educators can analyze and critically evaluate their reasons supporting the existence of the activities they direct.

Values provide essential unity to otherwise isolated or fragmented learning and co-curricular practices. In designing and directing programs, forensic educators are continually involved in making value judgments; they experience the close link between instruction and value choices described by William B. Bondeson as he writes:

> The discussions of the last fifteen or twenty years, both within philosophy and outside it, have shown that the notion of "value-free" science is simply misguided. Any time we attempt to decide what needs to be known, implicit in that decision is also a judgment about what does not need to be known. Any collection of facts is of necessity selective; any educational process, insofar as some things are chosen to be learned over others, involves judgments about some things being more important or valuable to know than others. (362)

Values inherent in a philosophy of forensics are no less important than those comprising foundations for responsible speaking. Since values identify concepts, ideas, and goals toward which we devote our concentration and energy, they include experiences and actions considered as worthwhile (Browne and Keeley 54). They are significant because they serve as springs of motivation for what we do as individuals, as speakers, and certainly as educators. As Ralph Eubanks and Virgil Baker contend, "commitment to values (or disvalues) determines action" (94).

Values contribute to the core of the decision-making process. For those of us who serve as forensic educators, they help clarify principles or goals in setting priorities; and they influence the direction and motivation for specific actions we take. Just as values function as critical benchmarks in speechwriting, they also guide our managerial decisions in directing and teaching. Explaining the role of diverse values in making essential choices, Eubanks and Baker note that they lead us to ask: "What ought to be done? And how to do it?" Values involve, they explain, "choosing between better and worse" (91).

Although specific values held by forensic educators and participants are as individualistic as the persons and programs possessing them, recognized concepts can range from standards such as freedom of expression, creativity, and enlightenment to concepts such as honesty, achievement, artistic appreciation, and recognition of the rights of individuals. Clearly, a philosophy of forensic coaching includes standards, both implied and boldly affirmed, through adherence to particular values.

With our definition of philosophy as it applies to forensics in mind, we now confront the task of exploring essential practices and premises contributing to a pedagogically sound philosophy. Such elements clearly reflect value allegiance and commitment to program goals.

A Rationale for Involvement

At the core of a discussion of elements comprising a philosophy of coaching is an overall consideration of justification for student involvement in the activity and reasons for administrative design and sponsorship of programs. As educators we must continually ask: Are the programs we direct based upon reasons that invite careful pedagogical scrutiny? Is forensic activity open to the best efforts in academic research that can be devised and utilized by professionals? Is the activity worthy of student investment of time and commitment?

As forensic educators we often delight in hearing students clash in their discussion of ideas and opinions. Debaters and speakers may easily gather reputations within campus environments for their facilities with words and ability to ask questions in classes and public forums. On occasions, members of the speech team of a particular college or university may even knowingly or unknowingly intimidate their fellow students through their forthright participation and questioning; at other times, they may gather admiration for abilities to speak with force and clarity.

While not denying numerous benefits gained through sharpening participatory skills assisting speakers in and out of competitive environments, the claim of this educator is that the promotion of surface skills alone is not

adequate rationale for establishing and administering forensic programs. Instead, our primary criteria must include continued examination of what we are doing and why. Indeed, an overriding concern must be to avoid preoccupation with shallow and sophistic practices. Further, debate and speech competition as a discipline must be open to questioning the foundation and strength of society's values. In their evaluation of patterns of forensic philosophy, Ronald Lee and Karen King Lee affirm the need of forensic proficiencies, particularly those related to debate competition, to progress beyond the mere acquisition of skills. "Although certain skill-building benefits accrue from debate participation," they note, "technique alone would not serve as the justification for the activity" (357). They add: "Argumentation implies a particular intellectual and moral stance. The importance of this stance is often severely compromised by popular practices in the activity" (357).

The Focus of Student Development

On the "circuit of competition" students and coaches occasionally encounter the contest judge who insists upon giving a lengthy oral critique even if time has not been allowed for such a session between rounds. Most of us have experienced these meetings when the evaluator engages in a long discourse explaining his or her particular achievements as a performer, speaker, or debater. While my philosophy

certainly affirms the value of judge-participant dialogue and the benefits acquired from immediate feedback after a round of competition, such practices introduce an important philosophical element: The focus of forensics must be upon student development. Indeed, if the activity is to maintain sound footing, appraisals must include continuous evaluations from the perspective of participating students. Further, the primary criterion in administration of programs must focus upon potential benefits for participants.

Emphasis upon student development means that we view forensic activity with careful scrutiny. Repeatedly, those of us who direct forensics delineate the myriad advantages students may derive from participation. As Ron R. Allen and his colleagues observe, forensics contributes "to the intellectual growth of students by teaching them to think rationally, communicate effectively, and make responsible judgments" (388). As these observers point out, we should not claim, however, that only forensic participation can develop these qualities (388).

My contention is that the potential exists in the forensic environment to make it a special place for enhanced student development. In numerous activities across university and high school campuses, years of experience are prerequisites to achieving success and benefits. While forensics can and should provide a vehicle for extended growth and experimentation by participation, the activity

offers rich possibilities for student development at a variety of levels. Delineating a philosophy that focuses upon the diversity of student participants, Don Faules, Richard Rieke, and Jack Rhodes contend:

> The most difficult challenge of all to the teacher of forensics is this: to realize that to succeed as an educational endeavor, forensics must serve not only the student who comes voluntarily; not only the student who sounds as if she could be a winner; but forensics must seek out the students who are capable and potentially effective who have never heard of debate, and who do not appear in a speech class. (53)

Thus, a philosophy of forensics with an orientation based upon student development may appropriately ask: Is forensics open to students reflecting a variety of experience levels? How is the program designed to meet the growth needs of students? Is participant development a primary consideration in the type of program that is designed and funded by sponsoring organizations, departments, and universities?

Communicating through Forensics

The way that members of speech teams view listeners makes a statement about the philosophy developed by particular programs. Just as a public message is designed to solicit responses from listeners, forensic teams need to contemplate the characteristics and potential feedback of

diverse audiences. However, when "audiences" for forensics are mentioned to newcomers in speech programs on some campuses, responses often identify a single judge or perhaps a panel of critics for a final round of competition. A key element in the forensic philosophy of this writer is that the terms "public" and "audience" should be interpreted as comprehensively as possible. In fact, communicating with public audiences should be a logical expectation of competitive forensics. To miss opportunities to communicate with larger and varied audiences beyond the contest round is a serious loss to student development and the future of forensics.

Advocating that forensics can and should make a contribution of "real influence" to the "public sphere," Robert Weiss maintains that the classroom fosters a special environment for free expression of ideas. Indeed, forensics can fulfill a significant role in contributing to public understanding, growth, and free expression. Weiss explains: "Forensics is a classroom. One could hope for a growing recognition that this forensics 'classroom,' above all, can be treated as constituting a part of the larger public sphere" (475). As forensics fulfills a responsibility to contribute to public understanding and decision-making, the expectation that participants experience communicating with a variety of audiences should not be an anomaly, but a routine practice.

Viewing audiences as an essential part of forensics influences the philosophical bases of programs. With this orientation, listeners are emphasized; they are seen as reasons for giving speeches or presenting works of literature. If the dynamic task of communicating with diverse listeners is stressed, university debaters, for example, see the communication of cases as a vital counterpart for effective construction of arguments. With this philosophy, forensics accomplishes the goal advanced by Wayne Brockriede when he writes:

> Central to forensics under the definition I am advancing is not any single skill but the total process of people communicating arguments, a process that requires both dialectical and rhetorical dimensions. (95)

The practice of encouraging speakers, including debaters, to channel forensic participation beyond traditional tournament settings is a major step in developing flexible and comprehensive skills of participants. Clearly, the results of such a philosophical approach include lasting benefits for student participants and cooperating communities as well. Pamela Stepp, speaking specifically of CEDA debate, affirms the need and benefits of communicating outside contest rounds when she writes:

> In order to advance the educational goals of debate and to keep large numbers of students involved we must do

> more than provide competition through tournaments. Tournaments provide learning experiences and practice grounds. But it is also necessary to take our students out of the tournament setting into the real world. (86)

She concludes: "When we watch and listen to our students debate in real world settings we will be able to see what they have learned from their debate education" (86).

Another way of viewing forensics as communication is to reject clearly the perception that audience restriction and selectivity are necessary for forensic activity to occur. When the interpretation contestant, for example, explains that he or she cannot present a contest selection for a group of senior citizens or an environmental study group because the situation is "not the same as we have for contests," critical premises of audience adjustment and speaker flexibility are ignored. When debaters restrict their audiences to "qualified" auditors or request decisions of judges who are not expected to give or receive reciprocal or correcting feedback, the activity fails to reach beyond extremely narrow limits and neglects a prerequisite for convincing argumentation.

With an emphasis upon forensics as communication, program dimensions must give careful attention to language sensitivity and utilization. Forensic activities are excellent avenues for allowing students to discover how

language choices can be adapted to various audiences and judges.

Specifically, communicative and ethical expectations will reject practices using language as a means to deceive or mislead listeners. Language must continually withstand the tests of clarity and perspicuity. When usage is limited to "in house" terminology designed for isolated debate and forensic environments, it does not foster skills necessary to communicate with larger publics. It can also contribute to an isolated and distorted view of forensics on the part of participants. If debaters, for example, remark, "Oh, we lost our round to a lay judge because he couldn't understand what we said; we need a coach or former debater who can talk our language," we see a fundamental loss of linguistic sensitivity and adaptability. Such perceptions also contribute to students' visualizing forensics as existing in an isolated or special environment. Hollihan and Riley, speaking of linguistic practices in debate rounds, stress that "debate must abandon its idiosyncratic communication style and its specialized language so that debaters become ordinary language users" (403).

Complementing Academic Development

Confusion often occurs in academic life when research, laboratory skills and competencies are not fully developed or appropriately used. A skilled student researcher, for example, may accumulate extensive bibliographies but never

attempt to write a required document. In forensics, team and individual problems develop when students neglect to incorporate forensic activity as an integral part of the total undergraduate program. Repeatedly unproductive experiences develop for some students when speech activity replaces overall academic interest and achievement. When this development occurs, essential personal and professional goals are neglected, and local forensic programs can even acquire reputations for becoming isolated or nonrelational entities in their university communities.

A sound philosophy of forensic coaching must then emphasize integration as an important quality in the total educational experience of participating students. As much as coaches like to see their students succeed in tournament competition, and although coaching reputations may occasionally depend upon visible success, pedagogical standards require the discipline of forensics to promote and facilitate educational experiences of undergraduates. Clearly, as James Dittus points out, "the emphasis in forensics should not be on the mastery of forensics skills for a professional career" (25). Instead, the goal of forensics, he continues, "should be educational, focusing on preparing students to meet these challenges in whatever career they pursue" (25).

One approach for integrating forensics into the overall experience of undergraduates includes incorporating

forensics across the curriculum. This concept, recently recognized as a unique means of linking disciplines and overlapping research interests, grants valuable freedom to innovative student and academic leadership. More broadly formed, however, is the philosophical concept of viewing forensics as a laboratory for student growth and service. Jack Kay makes a clear case for the approach when he contends that pedagogical benefits increase as forensics relates to and models everyday discourse. He explains:

> By more closely resembling natural discourse situations, competitive forensics would allow students to utilize the results of scholarly research on persuasion and communication in their efforts to prepare for forensic competition. By mirroring the audience and interaction demands of natural discourse, students would learn a great deal more about the argumentation and communication process. (67)

Thus, forensic programs can continually evaluate their philosophical bases by examining the incorporation of forensics into the academic experiences of participants. Clearly, a key pedagogical measure includes evaluating how the activity contributes to the "wholeness" of undergraduate experiences.

Encouraging Multidimensional Participation

A repeated criticism of intercollegiate forensics is that students often duplicate participation experiences.

Some individual event speakers, for example, desire only to compete in the categories in which they participated during prior semesters or in high school. In other programs, debaters continue rewarding competition each term but reject the challenge to develop individual event entries.

My observation is that student participation patterns are very easily established. However, while past experiences of students often influence the diversity of a squad's program, individual participation can usually be expanded to include a broader range of events for individuals and for entire forensic teams. Thus, a key element in my coaching philosophy is that programs can profit from a multidimensional focus.

Diverse programs require cooperation. If students with special interests in individual events work jointly with debaters as a part of a unified effort, team goals and benefits are easier to reach. If debaters also attempt individual event competition, they gain a clearer perspective of forensics as a whole experience. My choice is to encourage speakers to participate in at least one type of debate and as wide a range of individual events as time and resources allow. Of course, this proposal does not suggest that students should not develop their specializations; it simply emphasizes the value of broad exposure through multidimensional programs and participation.

As detailed in an earlier paper, my repeated experience demonstrates that specific team benefits emerge from the philosophy of a multidimensional emphasis. Advantages include the promotion and development of a "total" concept of forensics, the achievement of increased unity among team speakers, and the creation of a strong public relations entity with potential to increase positive publicity and good will among various forensic publics (21-22).

A key question remains: Does the comprehensive philosophy create advantages for participating students? My experience indicates that such a program allows students to accomplish growth which is not possible with limited or restricted participation. My claim is that students experience more success, they expand talents to enhance diverse communication skills, they see winning and losing from different perspectives, and they experience feedback from an important blend of audiences. In short, this philosophy affirms the contention of James Dittus when he explains how viewing debate and individual events as separate activities "has impeded forensics' ability to enhance a student's education" (24). He concludes that the two dimensions "should be considered as complementary activities designed to provide a well rounded forensics education" (24). My addition must stress that students should be encouraged to expand their educational experiences

through freedom to participate in a variety of individual events as well.

Ethical Choices in Managing Ideas

Discussion of a philosophy of forensic coaching is certainly incomplete without attention to ethical dimensions. Initially, a surface consideration of ethics may quickly focus upon the importance of teaching competitors to practice honesty in research and speaking. Although such a standard is a wise beginning, ethical considerations are broader in scope. Indeed, sound forensic practices must go beyond surface observations to appraise the activity's substance and operational standards.

A sound ethical philosophy should examine the raw material with which students work. Clearly, forensic entries can easily reflect our culture's failure to scrutinize the substance of communication. Kathleen Hall Jamieson describes such failures in our society's communication practices as she notes:

> Today the search for substance is more readily thwarted. Abbreviated forms of communication abound. Our cultural literacy has eroded. The allusive has become elusive. So too has our ability to conceive speeches that invite a reconsideration of who we are as individuals and as a people. Without understanding who we have been and what it has meant, it is difficult to reconceive where we are going or ought to go. (239)

As Jamieson points out, "our ability to create reasoned, informed public assent has waned" (239). Likewise, the substance of forensic events can easily neglect the challenge of themes, controversies, and concepts daring to deal with difficult societal and civilizing values.

The discipline of forensics has unique opportunities to perform an important service role through its argumentation and presentation of significant societal issues. In assuming an academic and community responsibility, it can and should rise above the charge that it occasionally functions only as an intellectual counterpart of athletics. However, if forensics becomes an activity enjoyed only by isolated participants and limited coaching leadership, it contributes to education being a concern for or a domain of the elite. Robert Weiss explains the consequences of such a mind-set when he says: "Where education is envisioned as an entirely elitist operation not accessible to the expression of public concerns, the public realm is automatically excluded and becomes irrelevant" (474). Weiss envisions a significant role for forensics when he adds: "The classroom, including forensics education, may well be a place where citizens confer. It may be free enough for real opinions to be shared" (475).

An ethical view of forensic coaching must then view speech activity as a vehicle to question and refine even the best of human values, concepts, and standards through

advocacy and performance. Through a strong commitment to evaluate ideas, coaches and speakers can utilize diverse events as vehicles for educational growth and development reaching far above contest mechanics. If, for example, students can conceive of their experiences with duo-interpretation, persuasive manuscripts, and debate cases as opportunities to weigh competing ideas, conflicts, and questions that are real to them as human beings, individual growth and societal awareness can result.

Forensic educators and participants have special opportunities to develop and maintain ethical standards during all phases of debate case preparation and the composition of contest speeches. Specifically, public address entries and cuttings for oral interpretation must be governed by the same standards we expect from the ethical public speaker or professional speechwriter. As Carolyn Keefe notes, early treatises within the rhetorical tradition set forth principles that must be maintained in today's speechwriting. The choices, Keefe explains, still include temptations to "make up some evidence here, misquote a source there, and throw in some tricky reasoning and shallow emotion" (9). Such a philosophy asks: "Who knows, who cares, as long as the case results in a favorable verdict?" (9). Certainly the ethical foundation of a sound philosophy of forensics must reject the omission or distortion of ethical standards of speech composition. If sound choices

govern the preparation of events by a particular team, standards will be more easily followed in competition as well.

Experienced forensic coaches and participants observe repeated links between a speaker's commitment to the substance of forensic events and his or her overall achievement. In fact, as students demonstrate genuine belief in the ideas within their speeches and interpretative works, their performances are often more successful and their accomplishments are more satisfying. Conversely, as events appear detached from speakers, they tend to be regarded as merely competitive tasks. My personal pedagogical objection to numerous debate rounds occurs when "cards" are "played" through a reading blitz with very little apparent grasp of the ideas contained in them. Occasionally, I observe how direct, specific questions about what a debater personally believes about an issue are regarded as inappropriate or out of place. The preferred ground in such cases is for the game to be played on a surface where ideas and evidence are impersonal. Voicing a similar concern, Hollihan and Riley stress that students need the "opportunity to argue positions that they really believe, and explore the reasons behind their own personal values" (403). The authors go on to state: "Debate, as our laboratory for the practice of communication and argument, has not only lost much of its aesthetic appeal, but it also

has strayed from its core truth, argumentation is persuasion" (403). Ethical persuasion, we must add, assumes speaker commitment to ideas.

The stress of this discussion must not give the impression that failures to utilize opportunities for personal understanding and advocacy through forensics are limited to debate competition. Although some individual events by their nature tend to elicit direct personal responses to value choices, individual events can easily fail to capitalize upon opportunities to encounter significant human issues. The interpreter of dramatic literature, for example, can easily present a cutting from a squad file without ever personally confronting the composition of the literary characters or the universal nature of the elements comprising the dramatic conflict of the piece. Thus, a repeated challenge to the forensic educator is to encourage students to reflect their own personal commitments and values through a variety of forensic formats.

Visualizing Achievement through Practice

Forensic directors usually develop ideas within their philosophies that they consider as basic in coaching. Such concepts may also serve as standards in teaching and as trademarks by which they are known to team members. In my personal ranking of principles, I share the time-honored

standard that structured practice remains critical in a sound coaching philosophy.

Practice contributes to a justification of forensics because work and rehearsal sessions often produce the major periods of growth for participants. In actual tournament competition, students may or may not meet their own expectations; however, workshop and rehearsal periods can lead students to achieve development by testing and communicating ideas in an atmosphere of acceptance, correction, and refinement. I find that if students can experience success in practice sessions, they see achievement in rounds of competition more philosophically. They can rightfully maintain a sense of pride in their work if planning and practice periods are thorough and rewarding.

What is the best method of conducting practice sessions? Responses vary with directors, and tales of our forensic past relate the "secrets" of the successful. My experience affirms that individual work periods must be blended with group rehearsals, practice rounds, and performances. Peer presence and healthy pressure often lead to careful preparation not generated by work with the coach alone.

Rewards, however simple, motivate improvement and success. For example, a standard procedure within the program of my school is to accent achievement through practice. After students are selected as entries for a

particular tournament, their names are posted on the speech-debate preparation board. When they have completed expected preparation, their names are highlighted. The posting is displayed boldly as a recognition of progress completed. Although similar procedures vary with numerous directors and students, the important emphasis should be upon preparation requiring disciplined and systematic work through directed practice.

Fostering Ethical Competition

With the emphasis upon the importance of substance and preparation of forensic events, we must also give attention to practices directly affecting competition. What standards should we insist upon as a part of a sound coaching philosophy? Conversely, can we identify practices to avoid in maintaining high ethical standards?

A major premise for ethical competition must emphasize adherence to rules and regulations governing participation in national organizations, regional bodies, and local tournaments. Coaching guidelines should insist that adhering to official policies is more important than team advancements, finals ranks, and trophies. Specifically, rules regulating debater eligibility, evidence citations, classifications of literature, and calculations of years of experience are representative of the kinds of decisions coaches and students must repeatedly make together.

Just as standards exist for ethical coaching and participation, local and national organizational rules must continually foster clear and ethical practices as well. For example, standards from tabulation rooms must apply to all competitors and coaches, judging panels should not be "adjusted" to fit the demands of particular participants, and tournament policies should be communicated as easily and forthrightly as possible.

A philosophy of forensics must recognize that rules and standards exist to regulate competition, and competition involves a philosophy toward winning and recognition of achievement. A win-loss record can become the major criterion for evaluating participation; or speakers, interpreters, and debaters can view the goal of winning as an ideal motivation for disciplined preparation and performance. Even the act of setting achievement goals has the power to produce benefits far beyond a moment of excitement in an awards assembly at the conclusion of a tournament. An ethical and pedagogically sound philosophy toward winning and losing has the obligation of teaching through instruction and example how forensics can contribute to the development of communication and interpersonal skills that outweigh tournament results. The advice of Greggory Simerly and Brian McGee is an appropriate reminder when they state that "learning does not necessarily lead to winning" (9). Of course, forensic directors and team members can

profit from repeated discussion of the purposes underlying forensic competition. Such evaluations are important in forming the philosophy of local programs.

Establishing and maintaining credibility as a director of forensics is critical in upholding standards of ethical competition. The forensic educator is evaluated by the choices she or he makes on the forensics circuit among fellow directors as well as during team preparation, goal setting, and interpersonal relationships. Director responsibilities are especially demanding since they include all phases of preparation and competition. Allen, Willmington, and Sprague describe the ethical coach as one who simply challenges "students to compete to their fullest potential at an appropriate contest level while abiding by established rules and standards of fair play" (395). If the coach is credible, his or her attitude will have a major influence in forming the philosophy of others toward competition and recognition. "Ideally," as Allen and his colleagues note, "the coach should serve as a role model of the ethical person who graciously accepts both victory and defeat" (395).

Conclusion

The goal of this essay has been to explore the premises involved in a sound philosophy of coaching forensics. Although individual directors of programs possess diverse personal views about successful coaching, the goal of this

presentation has been to provide pedagogical principles capable of serving a variety of forensic programs. These concepts include a rationale for involvement, an emphasis upon student growth and achievement, a clear role for forensics in fostering communication and academic development, benefits gained through a multidimensional focus and practice, and ethical choices in managing ideas and competition. While our list of qualities comprising a sound forensic philosophy is certainly not inclusive, the goal has been to set forth a focus contributing to the clarification of our responsibilities and a stimulation of further discussion, openness, and exploration.

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